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ABSTRACT

"Learning to Read Through the Arts" had as its target population 130 Title I eligible children ages 10 to 12 who were performing at least two years below grade level in reading. Student selection was based on standardized achievement test scores. The program focused on the improvement of reading skills through motivating pupil interests. Supplementary workshops in the arts, (dance, theater, music, painting, sculpture, mixed media, drawing, printmaking, puppetry, crafts, film making, and others) were closely correlated with the reading program. Weekly field trips supplemented the instructional program. A workshop was provided for parents. Based on the evaluator's site visits and California Achievement Test results, the program succeeded in serving the needs of the 130 enrolled students. Most of the recommendations made in a previous evaluation of the program were implemented: i.e., the program was expanded to more days of the week, the program was emulated by other schools, a workshop in crafts and communications and a parents' workshop were included, emphasis continued to be on self discovery, and, more materials were obtained. The program improved the enrolled students' reading skills, increased their artistic interest, and improved their motivation to read. (Author/JM)

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EVALUATION REPORT

Function No. 09-51699

# GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM CHILDREN'S PROGRAM: LEARNING TO READ THROUGH THE ARTS

SCHOOL YEAR 1974-1975

DR. DAN BERGER

An evaluation of a New York City School district educational project funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-10) performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1974-75 school year.

UDO 16842

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The third evaluation objective was to determine the extent to which the program, as actually carried out coincided with the program as described in the Project Proposal. This objective was evaluated by several site visits.

## CHAPTER III: FINDINGS

1. Evaluation Objective #1: To determine whether as a result of participation in the program, the reading total grade equivalent and mathematics grade equivalent (concepts) of the pupils will show a statistically significant difference between the real posttest score and the anticipated posttest score.

The results of the statistical analysis, as discussed in Chapter II and presented in MIR form 30A appended to this report, indicated that there was a significant improvement in reading scores. The mean post test reading grade equivalent (3.12) surpassed the predicted grade quivalent (2.67) at a significant level (Corr. $t = 2.77$; $p \leq .01$).

As explained in Chapter II the math concept raw score, rather than grade equivalent was used in the statistical analysis. The results indicated that the mean math posttest score (11.51) was significantly greater (corr. $t = 1.72$, $p \leq .05$) than the pretest score (10.56), when evaluated by a one tail test of statistical significance.

These analyses were based on the results of only 85 (reading) and 84 (math) students. A total of 167 students enrolled in the program of which 37 dropped out, most of these shortly after the program began. As students dropped out they were replaced with

others in order to keep the register at 130, as specified in the project proposal. 15 students were absent on the day of the pretests. The home-school grades of five students were not reported, 25 students were absent for the reading posttest, and 26 were absent from the math posttest.

2. Evaluation Objective #2: This objective was dropped from the evaluation design. The reasons for doing so were discussed in Chapter II.

3. Evaluation Objective #3: To determine the extent to which the program as actually carried out, coincided with the program as described in the project proposal.

The evaluator observed approximately 25 classes in session, and one parents' workshop, and concluded that the program appeared to be implemented as indicated in the project proposal. At the various class sessions it was observed that students were participating in art related activities, and it was evident that as part of their learning experience they were being taught reading and mathematical skills. Vocabulary lists pertaining to specific arts were evident in all rooms. Measurement of materials and supplies was part of the painting workshop. In a film making class, prior to beginning a new project, students listed the related words. (i.e., parts of camera and film making techniques to be used), and read aloud the directions they had planned and wrote with the help of the teacher. In the reading classes observed, the learning experience focused entirely on reading, but, in part, used artistic

concepts as a teaching medium.

An area of difficulty was what appeared to be an excessive amount of acting out among certain students. These same students also had a tendency to be absent more often than others, and/or "roaming the halls" and disturbing the work of other students. During the several site visits the number of students in a classroom was generally below the 17 specified in the proposal, for the reasons indicated above.

These problems were relatively new to the Guggenheim program and came about, in the opinion of the project director, because of the expansion from an after school program to one starting at 1:00. Many schools, apparently, sent their "discipline problems" in an effort to get them out of the school and in an environment where they could possibly benefit more than in a standard classroom. As these problems became evident the program staff undertook a number of measures, successfully reduced classroom disruption and fostered an environment more conducive to learning. Hall patrols were instituted and an entrance/exit system set up that minimized "roaming the halls". A "quiet room" was designated where more serious problem students were sent for part of the day. In the room, such students were given controlled, directed activities and special attention to their problems. In some cases the home or school was contacted and asked to assist in resolving the student's difficulties.

The success of these efforts was evident in later site visits when the noise level was found to be significantly less and classroom disruptions virtually eliminated.

4. The facilities for the program were not adequate. Walls were made of plywood, electrical outlets were at a premium and washing and toilet facilities were significantly below the standards found in the New York City Schools.

5. The recommendations from the last prior study were:

(a) expand the program to more days of the week and thereby serve more students

(b) the program be emulated by other schools

(c) include workshop in crafts and communications and

(d) a parents' workshop

(e) obtain and display original works of art

(f) continue to place emphasis on self discovery

(g) obtain more materials.

The program has been expanded, but not to the degree recommended because of the lack of funds. Original works of art cannot be obtained and displayed because of the lack of security and insurance coverage. All other recommendations have been implemented.

6. Based on the site visits and test results, it is the opinion of the evaluator that, the program serves the remedial needs of the 130 enrolled students who were 2 or more years below grade level in reading. It appeared to improve their reading skills, increase their artistic interest and improve their motivation to read.

## CHAPTER IV: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the test analyses indicated significant improvement in reading and mathematical concepts skills. Site visits indicated that the program was implemented as planned. Discipline, poor facilities, and a tendency for some students to walk in and out of their rooms, or to be absent were found to be problems.

Based on the findings in Chapter III the following recommendations are made:

1. The program should be continued and expanded to serve more students. This expansion should be in the form of a larger site and an increase in the number of days the program is in operation.

2. The facilities of the program need to be significantly improved. Standard rather than temporary plywood walls should be used; wash-up and toilet facilities need to be upgraded. More electrical outlets need to be made available.

3. Careful screening of program applicants should be instituted so as to avoid having a large number of students with serious psychological problems.

4. All students who are accepted should be considered to be on probation for the first few weeks. Those who, in the opinion of the program staff, cannot benefit from a Reading Through the Arts program should be returned to their schools.

5. The "quiet room" and other measures discussed in Chapter III to deal with the discipline problems should be re-instituted, if warranted next year.

6. An additional reading teacher should be hired to serve more students and also to act as a resource person for the Art workshop staff. This person would meet regularly with staff members and aid in developing reading materials for the workshops.

7. Increase the hours of the social worker so she may meet with the children as well as with the parents and staff.

8. Limit the dance workshops to a single workshop instead of a double one.

9. Include workshops for the apprentices.